

TRIES AT TRUTH. By Arnold White, author of "Problems of a Great City," etc. London: Isbister & Co., 1891. Pp. x., 150.

This book consists, in the main, of a series of short articles contributed to the "Echo." It deals with such subjects as Strikes, Socialism, Sweating, Pauper Immigration, Colonization, etc. Mr. White writes in an earnest spirit which is worthy of all praise; his views are clear and decided. The general idea he seeks to express is that "the tender and personal charity appropriate and indeed due to individual misery by each of us, is calamitous when applied by the State to misery in the mass. Emotional benevolence applied to misery in the mass creates the evils it blindly seeks to destroy. Benevolence by government is more cruel than inexorable law." Speaking of "Gifts to the Distressed," he says, "Untutored emotion has wrought even more harm than deliberate wrong, because it perpetuates evils it wishes to destroy. Goodness of motive is no criterion of goodness of deed. Sorrow and misery in the mass require scientific treatment from which emotion is cast out." As a consequence the writer objects to our present Poor Law as an "immoral compromise," holding that relief of pain is not the function of the State; its function is to govern wisely, impartially, uprightly. Now, whatever truth there may be in these sweeping assertions, no one could well argue that it is more than a half-truth.

With many of the author's views we are in hearty sympathy, such as his insistence on individual responsibility, on moral changes, on so limiting competition that profits shall not be derived from the misery, degradation, or death of others, on the rights and important place of labor unions, on the evils of adulteration. In his views on these subjects there is nothing particularly new; but he puts what he has to say in a clear and interesting way. On the subject of Colonization there are some practical remarks which are worthy of attention, though one may not agree with the first principle he lays down,—that all foreign pauper immigration should first be legally prohibited. It is doubtful whether "a couple of Gardner guns, used with smokeless powder, would be a very effective answer to Socialism;" still more so, whether, as a nation, we are destined "to become an abomination." If so, we shall not have perished without a prophet's warning.

R. A. DUFF.

DREI MONATE FABRIKARBEITER UND HANDWERKSBURSCHE: EINE PRAKTIISCHE STUDIE. Von Paul Göhre, Kandidaten der Theologie, Generalsekretär der evangelisch-socialen Congresses in Berlin. Zweiter Zehntausend. Leipzig: Fr. Wilh. Grunow. 1891. (222 S.)

A judicious man once remarked that those who intended to prepare themselves for the calling of ethical teachers should, for a time, share the life of manual laborers. It would have a good and lasting influence on their head and heart. The author of this meritorious study has adopted this course, and the beneficial effect plainly shows itself. He says that during the years he was devoting himself to the social question from a religious and clerical stand-point, he was especially prevented from gaining a clear insight and a sound judgment by one thing,—a too meagre knowledge of real life, of the actual condition of those on whose account we have a social, a labor question. It is true there is an abundant literature upon the subject; but who can guarantee that it corresponds to reality?